MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the proposals come up for discussion.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: No, since I referred to it....

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: My next supplementary is, what is the actual expenditure of Prasar Bharti and what are you earning today?

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, before I give some broad answer to the question we must get our first principles clear. Prasar Bharti is not a commercial network. Therefore, you cannot judge its performance in terms of revenue and expenditure. Approximately, two-thirds of the expenditure incurred by Prasar Bharti is met from the Budget.

SHRI BALBIR K. PUNJ: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is common knowledge that the Finances of Prasar Bharti are in a mess. There has been a cut in the expenditure, people have been denied facilities of are being picked up from home and dropped, Staff's overtime has been cut. Now there is a big competition in the TV industry. In case they continue to cut down the cost like this, then Sir, firstly, how do you expect Prasar Bharti to compete with the private channels?Secondly Sir, Prasar Bharti had advanced huge sums of money in the last two decades to various private people for programming and that money has not come. What is the amount of money which is pending and is Prasar Bharti taking any steps to recover that money from those very people? Thank you.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: I share the concern of the hon. Member. I am really touched by his concern. I agree that Prasar Bharti Board, Prasar Bharti Organisation, is facing financial troubles. It is facing the axe indiscriminately at the hands of my colleague from the Finance Ministry. Therefore, I would like all of you to support me in this endeavour to strengthen the economy. As for the arrears I would like to say that we have collected most of the arrears but there are arrears in regard to interest. And, we are doing our best to collect the arrears too. As of now, the employees there are suffering from some problems. I am talking to the employees. But, I also would like to talk to the hon. Members.

Incentive to rose producers

*66. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pushkar in Rajasthan produces the best export quality roses in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government intend to extend any special incentives to the rose producers in Rajasthan to further develop its flower sector for export purpose; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN) (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) While roses are grown in Pushkar in Rajasthan, roses are mainly exported from Bangalore and Pune regions.

(b) and (c) Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) provides financial assistance for Market Development, Infrastructure Development and Quality Development etc. under various schemes to registered exporters of scheduled products under the APEDA Act, which include floriculture and floriculture products.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, floriculture has become a very important issue all over the world. A number of countries are depending on this kind of product. Even, in our country, Tata Economic Consultancy Services has suggested for Technology Development Fund on the lines of Cotton and Oil Technology Mission. Our hon. Finance Minister has also mentioned in his Budget speech that floriculture is a thrust area for exports. Sir, the industry has also demanded for Technology Development Fund. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, would the Government establish such a fund and what more efforts are being made so that floriculture can be a very important area of export?

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN: Sir, APEDA has set up a market facilitating centre in Aalsmeer, Netherlands. The Centre became operational from 10th November, 2001. Tangible benefits have occurred by setting up the centre. Therefore, it was decided that the centre should carry on its activities. APEDA has initiated steps for rehabilitation of floriculture units. Discussions were held with bankers on 36 floriculture units for rehabilitation and 17 units have so far been rehabilitated. The proposal for other units is under active consideration by their banks.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, my second supplementary is this. The contribution of the floriculture to the overall GDP of agriculture has risen from 8 per cent at the beginning of the Eight Plan to 25 per cent now.

This can go up even to 40 per cent very soon. The Ministry has announced Vishesh Krishi Upaj Yojana. Can we expect that the hon. Minister will send a special team to Pushkar and help the producers for improving the quality and productivity so that exports can also take place from Pushkar, instead of only from the Southern States?

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN: Sir, roses are grown in Pushkar in Rajasthan. But the roses are exported mainly from Bangalore and Pune regions of India.

The Ministry of Agriculture has informed the Commerce Ministry that roses cultivated in Pushkar near Rajasthan is mainly offered for worshipping God and extraction of rose oil. The roses produced in this area are not meant for export as 'fresh-cut-flower', but for rose oil as value-added product. If the quality of Pushkar roses improves, we can think of exporting the same.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, I have a specific question and I want a specific reply from the hon. Minister. Will the Minister please send a team to Pushkar? The reply that the hon. Minister is giving is already there. My only question is: Will he send a special team to Pushkar to find out whether the quality can further be improvd because Pushkar can improve the quality? I only want help from the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Can you say something on this?

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN: The Government will consider the export from there also as a special agricultural product. As requested by the hon. Member, we will try to send a team also to Pushkar...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI BALBIR K. PUNJ: Sir, the Minister is reading from the reply that has been given ...(*Interruptions*)...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, may I ask a question? The specific question is about the Pushkar flowers. Is the hon. Minister aware of a special Programme taking place called Pushkar Project for the development of roses over there? The hon. Minister has said that quality of Pushkar flowers are not at par with the quality of "fresh-cut-flowers' which are exported. But, I am sure, the hon. Minister is aware that some flowers, which have got the fragrance, specially the roses, are exported to France for use in the manufacture of perfume. You can promote these flowers because they are of very good quality.

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN: We will definitely go into it and will try to improve the quality of Pushkar roses and we will export it.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Do you know about the "Pushkar Project", which was specifically meant for growing these types of flowers?

SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN: Yes, We will consider.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. ...(*Interruptions*)...

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज: सर, माननीय सदस्या पूछ रही हैं कि क्या आपको पुष्कर प्रोजेक्ट के बारे में जानकारी है? और, वे कह रहे हैं कि We will consider क्या जानकारी कंसीडर करेंगे? ...(व्यवधान) सर, वे केवल इतना पूछ रहीं हैं कि Does the Minister know about the 'Pushkar Project'? He should say 'Yes' or 'no', but he says, "We will consider". सर, पीठ पर बैठे हुए आप कुछ तो कहिए।

श्री सभापति: मैं इतना ही कह सकता हूँ ।..(व्यवधान)...

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज: कोई मिनिस्टर आधा-अधूरा जवाब देता है, कोई मिनिस्टर जवाब दूसरा देता हैं। यहां वे कहते हैं —We will consider.

श्री सभापति: जो लिखा हुआ है जवाब, उसी में से तो बोलेंगे। चलिए, नैक्स्ट क्वैश्चन।

Disabled students

*67. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled people, only 1.2 per cent of the disabled in the country has had any form of education;

(b) whether his Ministry has any statistics as to how many disabled students are studying in 322-odd universities in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) to (c) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 provides that all Government educational institutions and other educational institutions receiving aid